

County Orders Trash Dump Burning To Halt

The Kitsap County Commissioners have ordered an end to all burning at the controversial Ames Trash Dump on the New Belfair Highway by Sept. 15, and an immediate end to any burning that causes a hazard in the area.

The action came yesterday after the commissioners heard from Kenneth Crawford, co-owner of the dump, from Joseph Weigel of the county health department, and from a group of the dump's neighbors.

Crawford said early in the meeting that he and Mel Marler, the other owner, had tentatively set a date of Sept. 15 on which to curtail all burning on their own initiative. Installation of modern trash disposal equipment would hopefully allow the shutdown by then, he said.

After hearing from the neighbors of the dump, however, the commissioners decided that they had better put the Sept. 15 deadline on more than a "hopefully" basis, and ordered that it be met.

Furthermore, following testimony by the neighbors that still-burning pieces of paper have frequently floated onto their property, and occasionally even into their homes, the three-man board demanded that such a hazard be curtailed immediately.

R. E. Reid of Alpine Evergreen Co., and his wife, Omar Neshem, who runs a trailer court a mile from the dump and Edward Mosier, a Sunnyslope resident, all said they were worried or annoyed by the smoke and ash from the dump.

The Reids displayed a wallet-size piece of partially burned paper, which he said was found on his lawn, and noted that a similar hunk of material had been found on their carpet.

And the obnoxious smell from the dump gets into the draperies and furnishings, he said, and stays there. His 84-year-old father had moved out, Reid contin-

ued, and he said he knows of other residents who plan to follow.

Mosier said he fears for his life when the embers from the dump are blown his way and start dropping in his yard. He can imagine waking up to find the house afire, he said, or not waking up at all. "He could burn me out by Sept. 15," Mosier protested.

Neshem said his trailer court, a mile south of the dump, is also plagued by the odor and ash when the wind is right. He said he has elicited a promise from the dump owners that the problem would be cured in two weeks, and with a week left to go, he wouldn't take any action until then.

"If we still have trouble (after two weeks), we'll have another 180 names on that petition," Neshem said.

He was referring to a 56-name petition presented to the commissioners last week asking for abatement of the dump nuisance.

During his presentation, Crawford said he and Marler are

trying to make their business one of the best operated dumps in the state. "We're installing every piece of automated equipment we can," he said, and an investment of \$50,000 has been made since the dump won the contract for disposal of the trash from Puget Sound Naval Shipyard July 1.

He said since an article in The Sun last week telling of the petition with 56 names, a large number of other neighbors have called and voiced support for the operation of the dump. Crawford charged that the man who spearheaded the petition drive was paid to do it, and had admitted as much to nearly a dozen residents he approached with the petition.

The dump operation generally got the support of the county officials at yesterday's session. Weigel, the county sanitarian, said Marler and Crawford have had a good operation in the past, and have abided by health department demands. He urged the protestors to give them until Sept. 15 to accomplish their goals.

Commissioner Gene Lobe added, "I know this is a hardship on you people, and I wouldn't want to live under these conditions. But we do have trouble getting rid of garbage, I would just say 'Give them a chance' to work out the problems."

That was apparently fine with the protestors, as each said the two restrictions approved by the commissioners would be satisfactory.

The Ames dump has been the focal point of a controversy ever since it won the shipyard disposal contract. It increased the trash volume at the dump well over 30 times, Weigel has said, and left Crawford and Marler struggling to catch up with the demands of the extra volume.

Crawford alleged yesterday that many of his troubles since July 1 have been caused by a competitor unhappy about Ames getting the PSNS contract. He didn't name the competitor, but did claim that's who provided the money to pay the petition-circulator.

The dump owner also said that lack of time to prepare for the shipyard business has resulted in difficulty which he and his partner are working to correct.

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